

Docket No.: T13-0043
Bench Date: 7/31/13
Deadline: N/A

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: The Commission

FROM: Latrice Kirkland-Montague, Chief Administrative Law Judge

DATE: July 17, 2013

SUBJECT: Evansville Western Railway, Inc.,
Petitioner,

v.

Hawthorne Township, White County, Illinois; White County,
Illinois,
Respondents.

Petition for an Order authorizing the construction of a siding
track at the existing at-grade crossing of TR 205 (also known
as CR 1400N – DOT #346361M) in Hawthorne Township,
White County, Illinois.

RECOMMENDATION: Enter Order granting the Petition.

On April 26, 2013, the Evansville Western Railway, Inc. (“EVWR” or “Petitioner”) filed a Petition with the Commission, naming Hawthorne Township in White County, Illinois and White County, Illinois as Respondents. Petitioner requests authority to add a siding track through the existing highway-rail grade crossing of Petitioner’s single mainline track located at 1400N Road/TR 205 (AAR/DOT# 346 361M; railroad milepost OOH-357.79).

1400N Road/TR 205 is a rural two-lane township road located in Hawthorne Township, White County, Illinois. 1400N Road/TR 205 runs in an east-west direction between Okawville, Illinois and Evansville, Indiana, is approximately 16 feet in width, is paved with a bituminous surface treatment, and has no lane markings. In the absence of a posted speed limit, the statutory speed limit on 1400N Road/TR 205 at the grade crossing location is 55 miles per hour. The EVWR track crosses the existing roadway at an approximate angle of 40 degrees. The crossing warning devices currently consist of Crossbucks with YIELD Signs. As reported in the Grade Crossing Inventory available on the Commission’s website, the most recent average two-way daily vehicular traffic count at the crossing is 125 vehicles per day, with less than one percent of the traffic being commercial trucks.

The rail line is approximately 125 miles long and serves an electric generating facility, two coal rail-barge transloading facilities and several coal mines as well as other businesses. The current average daily train traffic on the EVWR line containing the 1400N Road/TR 205 crossing is approximately 8 to 10 trains per day, which can fluctuate daily depending on certain factors. Petitioner is estimating as many as 6 to 10 additional freight train movements per day are anticipated to arise on the subject rail line as a result of new coal mining operations set to begin production in Southern Illinois shortly, which represents an increase from the four additional freight trains per day that Petitioner initially estimated and reported in their original Petition.

The anticipated increase in train traffic will require the addition of a siding track through the 1400N Road/TR 205 to allow unit coal trains, well in excess of 100 cars each, to pass each other and operate in an efficient manner. Without the new siding, the trains would have fewer locations to pass, which would require Petitioner to stop trains more frequently and for longer durations at other locations along the subject rail line.

Petitioner will be responsible for the entire cost of the improvements. No assistance is being requested from Grade Crossing Protection Fund. Petitioner intends to begin construction of the second track and grade crossing improvements immediately after entry of the attached Order granting the requested relief, with all work to be completed as soon as possible thereafter.

Staff and Respondents have no objections to the Petition. I recommend entry of the attached Order granting the Petition.